

Governor Phil Murphy

TRANSCRIPT: April 20th, 2020 Coronavirus Briefing Media

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Holding a COVID-19 briefing. WATCH:



Governor Phil Murphy: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for your patience today. Mondays are a little bit complicated as we typically have a video conference with the White House, which was, I thought, a good productive conversation but it went on, as they have been. Thanks for allowing us to be a few minutes late. We'll be moving around a little bit our schedule this week, which I alluded to over the weekend. I'll come back to that in a minute.

With me today is the woman to my right who needs no introduction, the Commissioner of the Department of Health, Judy Persichilli. Judy, as always. To her right, Communicable Disease Service Medical Director in the Department of Health, again does not really need an introduction, Dr. Ed Lifshitz, great to have you both with us. To my left, another guy who does not need any introduction, the Superintendent of the State Police, Colonel Pat Callahan. Also, Jared Maples is with us, Director of the Department of Homeland Security and Preparedness, Deputy Counsel Parimal Garg, and to the rest of my colleagues.

Judy will go into this in a little bit more detail but before we get to the numbers, I want to announce that we have now added data from our long-term care facilities to our online data dashboard at Covid19.nj.gov. It is a comprehensive list of every long-term care facility in our state that has reported a case of COVID-19 among its residents, both by name and location. I know Judy will be able to speak more to this data in her report, but we are now going to see to it that every facility is reported openly as we had promised.


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This added reporting continues our efforts to put up as much data as we can. And I understand, which is a point of modest flattery, I have to say to particularly Beth Novak and Judy and their teams in terms of the Office of Innovation and Department of Health, I understand our information hub is being copied by other states, and so we take pride that we here in New Jersey created a national model.

Now getting to the charts and trends as we see them, let's start with a statewide look at the spread of COVID-19 and it is slowing. Again, this is a heat map that we've been showing over the past couple of weeks. It shows the rates by which the numbers of new cases are doubling, and that they have significantly slowed, or the numbers have gone up, and that's a good thing in this case. In areas of the state, which just a few weeks ago would see the number of total cases double in a matter of days, we're now seeing those rates slow to where we can measure them in the numbers of weeks. And again, that's really encouraging. If you look at Bergen County where this all started, at almost three weeks for doubling. My county, Monmouth, at 24-and-a-half days. We need to continue to see those numbers rise and that chart be as universally light as possible.

Today, we are reporting 3,528 new confirmed test results, positive test results, and the statewide total is now at 88,806, as you can see. You can see from this chart our three-week trend in reporting new cases and we have achieved relative stability. I say relative stability. This doesn't mean that we aren't going to see some days with one-off spikes or drops and we must move away from looking at snapshot data and instead looking at overall trend lines.

Our hospitals are reporting 6,986 COVID-19 patients, Judy, I got that right, I believe, of whom 2,018 are listed in critical or intensive care and 1,594 ventilators are in use. 74 patients are at one of our field medical stations. Judy, in her remarks I know, is going to touch on the fact that she was in Secaucus at one of our field medical stations this morning. Also the reality here, Judy, as she pointed out to me earlier, good news is hospitalization is down, intensive care is a little peskier here, and is not going down by as much or as quickly. That's something, obviously, we look at very carefully.

For the 24-hour reporting period, there have been 583, happily, folks who are discharged. Looking at this graph, we are seeing relative stability in the number of patients in critical or intensive care. Again, stability whereas hospitalizations have begun to show more of a downward trend. Now the two slides to come are the most important to us as we begin our planning for the next several weeks. They begin to give us our clearest indication of the path ahead. The number of newly hospitalized patients is moving, as I said, on a downward trend. This is one of our most important positive indicators. It means that our healthcare system is in a better position to be able to get ahead and stay ahead. It means that our aggressive social distancing efforts are having their desired effects.

These are real numbers. This is reality in our healthcare system. It means that as new cases are identified, and as we take steps to ramp up and expand our testing regime, we will be in a better place to capture and contain COVID-19. While there is no doubt that the lack of either a federal plan or real federal support for tests and PPE, both of which by the way, are essential to robust testing, there's no doubt that that has inhibited our testing efforts. The numbers on hospitalizations are a definitive measure.

In other words, we could speculate all we want, and we do a lot of it in terms of modeling, about what the denominator looks like. We try to get at that, obviously, through as aggressive testing as we possibly can. We're the fourth-highest tested state in America, but it still is not remotely close to what we need, particularly from the outset, from the feds, to get universal testing. So we're always debating and wargaming and modeling, what's the actual denominator? There's no wargaming here. These are facts. These are folks who are hospitalized.

This data helps inform our decisions as we look toward a reopening strategy, as we look to prepare for a spike that will surely come when we do reopen, and for a potential recurrence of this virus later this year. We must prepare for all those scenarios. We know that these types of viruses can mutate and come back worse for round two. This is about saving lives and we will continue to be data driven in our effort to save lives and to prepare for what's to come.

We had a conversation, Judy, Pat and I and others this morning at The Rock about the H1N1 reality that Ed has spoken to. And in fact, if anything, this is a much more lethal, much more you called it much more efficient virus. We have to prepare for that. We have to make sure that we're not getting dragged by that reality.

The number of discharges continues to outpace the numbers from intake. Please God may it stay that way. These lines intersected for the first time last week, and we can now see a trend emerging. Please let's hope it stays that way. This did not happen by accident. We planned, we worked, and we collaborated. We worked with our hospitals and with the US Army Corps of Engineers to increase hospital bed capacity. In fact, Judy, Pat and I, among others, will be in Atlantic City tomorrow morning, 9:30, is that right? To tour the Atlantic City field medical station. We work tirelessly, as did our healthcare providers I might add, to get more ventilators and to adapt existing equipment. We are not by any means claiming victory, but we are making progress. I want to thank everyone in our administration, in the healthcare community and in the federal government who have joined together to get us this far, and we have much further to go.

As if we needed a reminder as to the gravity of the challenge still before us, sadly today we must report another 177 COVID-19 related deaths. The total number of lives lost now stands at 4,377, 177 precious lives lost.

Among those we have lost was Ambassador Foday Mansaray of Franklin Township, Somerset County. Ambassador Mansaray was a representative of the International Human Rights Commission Relief Fund Trust, and Deputy Foreign Minister and High Representative to the United Nations. He was a strong advocate for his native Sierra Leone, and especially for our states and

our region's Sierra Leonean and West African communities. He put his community before himself and was always thinking about how else he could help others. He is remembered by friends and colleagues as a kind and hard worker whose boundless energy and sense of humor spread to all who happened to be around him. To his wife, Patricia, with whom I spoke yesterday, and their family, I extend our deepest condolences and our entire West African community is in our thoughts and prayers.

Bill Fechtmann, there he is, was a longtime resident and community member in Maywood. He was just shy of reaching his 95th birthday. Born in Jersey City, Bill enlisted in the Army in 1943 and throughout his three years of service, quite literally traveled around the world. Returning home in 1946, he went back to his prior job at the Borden Company and met Anna, who he would marry in 1948 and with whom he would share his life for the next 71-plus years. Bill and Anna settled in Maywood in 1950, which they would call home for 68 years, and he went back to school on the GI Bill and got a degree in accounting. He would retire for good in 1990. Bill and Anna, again, lived in Maywood for 68 years. Bill was a life member of Maywood VFW Post 7408 and served as its Quartermaster. He was a member of the Maywood Pool Commission and helped organize the annual July 4 Parade. Besides his beloved Anna, with whom again I spoke yesterday and had that honor. He leaves four children, William, Robert, Carol and Janet, and their families, which account for Bill and Anna's 10 grandchildren, and so many nieces and nephews. May God bless him and each and every one of them.

I'd like to remember Anna Gaffney, mother of a dear friend of both mine and Tammy's among so many members of our team. Anna was 81 when she passed away this weekend due to complications of COVID-19. Anna was born on the Fourth of July, as my mother-in-law was, in this case 1938 in San Sebastian, Puerto Rico, and came to the Mainland US at the age of 13, settling in the Bronx where she would eventually meet her husband, Edward. The couple would eventually move to Sussex County where they raised six children before retiring to Ocean County. She was a successful business owner and a passionate advocate for those in need. From our friendship with Jerry, I know Anna passed these values on to her children. So to Jerry and her entire family, you are in my and Tammy's and our entire team's and families' prayers.

Finally, today, we must note the passing of Ray Kenny, who until his death Saturday was serving as Senior Vice President and General Manager, Rail Operations at New Jersey Transit. We had hired, notwithstanding our great cooperation with New York during this entire crisis and during most times, we had stolen Ray from Long Island Railroad and thought we had a real coup on our hands a couple of years ago. And in fact, we did. He was a key member of our team immediately, working hard and making progress and restoring NJ Transit's trains to where we know they can be and where we need them to be and where they will be. He was a really good guy, and we will miss him dearly. I spoke to his brother Ed on Saturday and he described Ray as the perfect Irish uncle, always there for his nieces and nephews. God rest you, Ray. This one, none of these are abstract. Each and every one of these are humans and lives of our precious New Jersey family, but this one cuts right to the bone. Ray was a great man. God bless you, buddy.

These are just four more of the tremendous people we have lost to COVID-19. As we remember and mourn them, we must remember that we all have a role to play in losing fewer and fewer members of our extraordinary New Jersey family. I have not, we have not, made any decision over the past six weeks in a vacuum. My driving purpose, our driving purpose, has been to save lives, period. Every step we have taken from closing our schools to closing non-essential businesses and work sites, to requiring you all and us to wear a face covering at the supermarket and elsewhere, and everything else, has been made with a singular goal in mind. And that is our mission to save lives.

It may be inconvenient for some, and we get that, but your inconvenience pales in comparison to the 4,377 blessed souls who have now left us. My job, our collective job, is to protect the 9 million residents of our state as best as possible. For that, I will not apologize. In the coming days, I will announce the benchmarks we will need to see and the principles which we will follow to reopen our state and begin our reemergence from this pandemic. However, do not think for one minute that we're going to be able to flip a switch and return to life as we know it. We will be careful, and we will be strategic. We will continue to ask for you to play your part, and you've done an extraordinary job. That must be said. We will make decisions based on facts and medical science so we do not experience or exacerbate a second boomerang wave. As I mentioned earlier, that is a real possibility with a virus like this, even if we do everything exactly right.

I know many of you are worried about the small businesses in your community, as am I. Reopening our economy today would backfire on us in two respects: a large spike in COVID-19 cases, and no customers at our stores because people are still fearful for their health and that of their kids and families. This is a two-part scenario. Securing the public health situation so that you can have confidence as you get back, as we reopen our economy. Right now, that confidence does not exist. And we will align ourselves with our region to ensure that as one of us begins to reopen, we don't inadvertently expose each other to more cases of COVID-19.

We are working in a coalition because New Jersey is not alone in this. We are drawing from our neighbors' insights and experiences to make sure that New Jersey comes out of this, and we will, stronger and more secure. But to be clear, there is one overriding principle. Personal health creates economic health. Personal health creates economic health. It can't be the other way around. Consumer confidence, the willingness of people to go out and shop, to eat out, and for workers to feel confident that their workplaces are secure, only comes when people are convinced that their health is secure. Let me say it again. Personal health creates economic health. It has to happen in that order.

So to other topics, if I may, I had a good conversation this morning, a private conversation with the President, expressing, again, my strong belief that we need direct cash assistance to states. The President indicated that it was his hope that that could be part of the next round of stimulus. We can't wait another minute longer. We discussed the situation in New Jersey. In

fact, he had been studying that, as I mentioned, on many occasions. It's one of the handful of states that he probably knows the best.

We had a good, I thought folks, a good video call with the Vice President and his team, as well as most, if not all, Governors. Again, I reiterated direct cash assistance, interpretation as liberal as possible in the applications of the CARES Act money. And the fact that we're going to need a partnership with the federal government as it relates both people manpower and technology, by the way, for testing, for contact tracing, for healthcare infrastructure, as a general matter.

I want to continue to give the Department of Veteran Affairs a shout out, beginning with Secretary Robert Wilkie. Their teams have arrived as plus-up staffing in both Menlo Park, in Paramus Homes, not a moment too soon. I thank them again publicly. I participated, there is a daily telephonic prayer gathering, which is hosted by my colleague, Reverend Derek Green. I was honored to participate with that group today and it was quite inspiring. Each morning at 8:00 a.m.

A lot of focus on Camden today, there was some press about cases rising in Camden. Trying to parse through whether or not that was partly due to an increase in testing being done there versus some trouble spots. Our team reached out to Mayor Frank Moran, had a good exchange with Freeholder Capelli, spoke with Congressman Donald Norcross, and that's something we've been focused on throughout the day.

Back to the money side, which we can't ignore, the DGA under my leadership put out a statement on Saturday night, again reiterating the fact that we need urgently direct cash assistance to states. I had a very good exchange with Senator Menendez. I'm very happy to see, and if you haven't seen it already, it's worth a read. He and Senator Cassidy from Louisiana, bipartisan by the way, Democrat and Republican, co-sponsoring a bill for \$500 billion directed toward again, direct state cash assistance. That's the amount that has been requested by the National Governors Association. I'm looking forward to speaking with Governor Hogan, who is its chair, later on this afternoon.

I'm proud to report that the Office of Emergency Management, under the leadership of this man to my left, has now distributed more than 10 million pieces of personal protective equipment from the state stockpile that we've been able to put together. Over the past week alone, we moved nearly 5 million pieces, including nearly 900,000 N-95 masks, 1.3 million surgical masks, and more than 2.6 million gloves. So to Colonel Callahan and his team who have been working hard to source every piece of PPE we can possibly can find, congratulations and thank you.

We have also recently received, and Pat you alluded to this the other day, an N-95 mask decontamination unit from Battelle, which is currently being set up in Edison. Again, thanks to the prudent planning of our task force, we secured this item early, and this will help us deal with the continued national challenges around PPE. This is another area in which we continue to punch above our weight in the face of national challenges.

On Saturday, the National Action Network distributed face coverings and prepackaged meals to residents at the NanTech World Campus in Newark, many of whom needed both. To the Reverend Al Sharpton and Pastor Steffi Bartley, dear friends, thank you for all you're doing in the communities. Pastor Bartley had sent me pictures literally as I was walking over or driving over here, otherwise, I'd be flashing those up. You and I will hear from Pastor Bartley as to why we didn't get these pictures up, but I promise you they exist.

On testing, the [covid19.nj.gov/testing](https://www.covid19.nj.gov/testing) page has been updated to reflect the 27 public and community-based testing sites available across the state. As I have noted, there are many more sites which your primary care practitioner could direct you to if you meet the requirements for testing. All told, there are now 73 testing facilities in New Jersey. We were dealt a very tough hand as a country and as a state as it relates to the federal testing materials. We have pieced this together one step at a time to get to 73 different sites, fourth-highest number of tests of any state in America. Not what we're going to need to reopen by a long shot, but we have come a long way.

We continue, as I mentioned, to work with our federal partners and the private sector to significantly ramp up our testing capabilities. We know that a solid testing regime, as I mentioned earlier, will be critical, essential in our reopening strategy. We are encouraged by the tremendous partnership we have forged already with Rutgers University, with Abbott Labs, to pick two good examples on new testing systems, and with our private labs which continue to expand their processing capabilities.

We also continue to ask for volunteers with medical experience to join our army against COVID-19. Specifically, we need respiratory therapists, Judy, physicians, nurses and paramedics. If you have experience in these positions, please visit [covid19.nj.gov/volunteer](https://www.covid19.nj.gov/volunteer), as you can see, to sign up. In doing so, you'll be adding your name to the more than 22,000 healthcare workers who have volunteered with us.

Finally, I want to acknowledge before I turn things over to Judy, one of the best pieces of good news we have received throughout this entire emergency. Here is former Ridgewood High School lacrosse standout at Bates College, D3 All-American Jack Allard. That's Jack with his sister and his mom and dad. Five weeks ago on March 13 he didn't feel well, and he checked into JFK Medical Center in Edison, where he was confirmed positive for COVID-19.

His condition deteriorated and he was placed in a medically induced coma, put on a ventilator, and was transferred to the hospital at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. It was a long month, but slowly, Jack rebounded. And last Thursday, he was clapped out by the doctors and nurses who saved his life as he walked out of the hospital. I had the great honor to speak with his mom Jenny and with Jack himself a short while ago. What a story.

Let's put this in perspective. Jack, as you can see, is as athletic as they come. He is only 26 years old and yet we nearly lost him to COVID-19. Don't think for one minute that just because you exercise that you're immune. You're not. Jack is one of the extremely lucky ones. As I've noted earlier, there are 4,377 New Jerseyans who have not been as lucky. And some of them, by the way, have been Jack's age or even younger. So when I hear about folks weighing the economic pain versus the physical potential pain they may suffer with themselves, their kids or their parents, when I hear about playdates that are going on unabated, folks, look at that guy. The picture of health. That is Jersey through and through. An extraordinary athlete, as there are so many in this great state. We almost lost that blessed fellow. Folks, understand this is real. We'll get out of this. I promise you, but we won't get out of it with folks being casual about it.

Now overwhelmingly, you folks up and down the state have been doing just what you need to do. Please God, keep doing it. So to Jack Allard and his family, we share in your joy and triumph even as we mourn those we have lost. This pandemic has led us across the entire range of emotion. But for today, for Jack and for the hundreds more who have left our hospitals, we are hopeful and optimistic. I ask you to continue spreading your hope and optimism by sharing the good news in your community with every New Jerseyan through the social media hashtag, #NJThanksYou. So again, in a couple of days, I will lay out the blueprint for our way forward for opening our state. But we cannot get to that point if you stop doing the things you're doing. This is no time to let up. If anything, it's time to bear down as we've never, ever done before.

With that, please help me welcome the woman who needs no introduction, the Commissioner of the Department of Health, Judy Persichilli.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Thank you, Governor. Good afternoon. Well, the state surveyors continue to visit our long-term care facilities to inspect and assess their compliance with state and federal regulations and guidelines. As of yesterday evening, 21 facilities were inspected with additional surveys planned this week. The survey teams are looking at infection control, staffing, availability of personal protective equipment, and implementation of an outbreak response plan. For any facilities that have been identified and issued deficiency reports, they will be required to submit to the Department of Health directed plans of correction this week.

As a result of our finding at Andover Subacute Rehab Center, we are requiring them to hire a consultant administrator, a consultant director of nursing, an infection control professional and they are to cease all admissions. They must inform the department today of their progress and selection of these individuals, who must be approved by the Department of Health.

As the Governor mentioned today, we are posting a list of all facilities, their number of reported COVID cases, and the number of reported deaths due to COVID-19. Repeatedly we have reinforced their obligation to inform residents, staff and families. However, we are still hearing concerns that that is not taking place. So in the full interest of transparency, we are sharing the details.

Yesterday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, issued new guidelines similar to New Jersey's mandate to require long-term care facilities to notify its residents and their representatives of cases at their facilities. You may recall, our first notice to them was on March 6, and we reinforced that same notice on April 6. CMS is also reinforcing an existing requirement in New Jersey, that nursing homes must report communicable diseases, healthcare-associated infections, and potential outbreaks to state and local health departments. That is already in New Jersey regulation. They will also require that these reports go directly to CMS. We remind all long-term care facilities and all other healthcare facilities that they should report suspect outbreaks immediately to their local health departments. This will enable the local health departments to assist facilities in assessing the outbreak and put proper infection control procedures in place.

Now for today's report, our hospitals reported last night 6,986 hospitalizations, which includes COVID-19 positive patients and persons under investigation. This is a 5% decrease in the growth rate. There are now over 2,000 individuals in critical care; 1,592 of those individuals are on ventilators or about 82%. Again, you may recall we were as high as 97%. A total of over 11,000 COVID positive patients and persons under investigation have been discharged since March 31.

Our field medical sites continue to serve individuals who no longer need to be in the hospital. More than 200 individuals have been served at the Edison and Secaucus sites. Yesterday, at the Atlantic City site which we will be visiting tomorrow, a training took place for 80 medical personnel and other staff who will be working there. We expect that site to start serving patients this week.

I had the privilege this morning of visiting the alternate care site at the hotel on Secaucus. Today, they have 32 patients, nine are COVID positive healthcare workers, and 23 are COVID positive patients who came from the Secaucus federal site or the Edison site. Many of the patients coming from the federal medical sites are medically and socially complex, and for many reasons, cannot be supported in their homes. We have a patient who is blind and needs more assistance while she quarantines. We have several patients with complex chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma. We have patients with significant mental health disorders, including depression and anxiety, and very few social supports at home for them. Many of the individuals there do not speak English. They're exhausted, some are still feverish and have shortness of breath, and they are separated from their families and support networks. The team there is providing them that support. Several were most recently staying in homeless shelters.

The care team at this alternative care site is caring for everyone. They're accepting new admissions daily, and the census continues to grow. This site is being led by Dr. Jeff Brenner and Kathy Stillo who are on loan from United Healthcare. Cooper University Health Care is sharing Rachel Adams to temporarily work as the Chief Nurse Officer there. There is an APN,

advanced practice nurse that I met today, and along with Rachel, I'm proud to say they are both Rutgers graduates. The staffing agency, Horizon Healthcare Staffing that came to us through the portal has been amazing to work with. The teamwork at this site has been extraordinary as they establish this innovative model of care for perhaps those who have been left behind.

Today we're reporting 3,528 new cases for a total of 88,806 cases in the state. And sadly, as the Governor shared, 177 new deaths. Of the deaths that we are able to investigate, 43% are female, 57% are male; 50.5% are White, 21.8% are Black, 16.6% are Hispanic, 5.7% Asian, and 5.4% other. As reported previously, 60.7% have an underlying cardiovascular condition, 39.3% diabetes mellitus, 30.2% other chronic diseases, 19.8% chronic lung disease, asthma, emphysema, COPD, 15.8% chronic renal disease 15.2% neurological disability, 13.7% other, and 11% cancer. Additionally 27.9% are associated with long-term care facility clusters or outbreaks. Overall, in our mortalities, 40% are associated with long-term care facilities.

The VA homes at Menlo Park and Paramus still continue to be stressed. We continue to monitor them. On a call yesterday with the VA, they are sending individuals in to help both at the Paramus site first and foremost, and also the Menlo Park site. The Menlo Park site reported between yesterday and today, one additional death. The Paramus site has reported six additional deaths. We thank the VA for the support that they will be giving us over the next two weeks.

According to data from this morning, of the seven laboratory sending us COVID-19 results, 161,714 individuals have been tested; 72,463 have tested positive with a positivity rate of 44.81%.

In closing, thank you again for staying home and maintaining social distancing. It is making a difference. Stay connected, stay safe, stay healthy, stay doing your part in saving lives in New Jersey. Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Judy, thank you for this and for all. Just a couple of quick follow ups, may I? Counties again, positive cases, that's the same six that lead the pack in order Bergen, Hudson, Essex Union, Passaic, Middlesex. The race statistics are about where they've been, again, concerning, particularly about the African American number which looks to be about 50% higher than the overall representation in our society in New Jersey. Veterans, while there are a couple of positive cases, one piece of good news continues to be a largely, meaningfully better picture in Vineland, and that continues to be the case. Is that fair?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Yes.

Governor Phil Murphy: Yep, and so Menlo Park and Paramus is in fact where the VA has come in to help us surge. And by the way, they have said, God forbid we need it in Vineland, but they would also find a way to help us there if we needed it. Mahen, correct me if I'm wrong, just to get this out of the way before I forget. Tomorrow, we're not only going to be in Atlantic City in the morning, I'm then going to tag on, I'm going to keep going south to look at some of the storm damage from last week, which means we'll be here at three o'clock tomorrow. Is that correct? Okay. And then on Wednesday, to be determined, I know, but we are trying to coordinate with the Army Corps and look at some of the northern facilities, not field stations, but places where they've reconfigured or reopened wings, etc. So that's still a potential for Wednesday, which means it would be again three o'clock, if that happens here as well. Forgive us for the next two days. We're going to be a little bit later than normal, 3:00 p.m. tomorrow and 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday. If that changes, Mahen will come back to us.

With that, Pat Callahan, anything on PPE, compliance, infrastructure, beds, other matters? Thank you.

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: Thanks, Governor. Just for the weekend compliance report, a subject who had heard that they were going to open up a testing site at a local pharmacy went on Facebook and threatened to basically run people over. The part about this story that's important is that people saw it on Facebook and did the right thing and called the police. They subpoenaed the IP address, went to the subject's house where he did admit to making the post, but indicated he did not have any intent to harm anybody. Over four different events over the weekend in Patterson, 14 different individuals were cited with EO violations. Again, four more gatherings than we'd like to see but again, generally overall compliance pretty good. In Newark, 19 EO violations were issued along with three businesses being shut down. In South Brunswick, four subjects were cited for burglary and EO violations. In Lambertville, a subject was cited for being in a closed state park. In Passaic, again, another large gathering where the owner of the home was cited for the EO violation. Jersey City, another subject, actually seven subjects charged with being in a closed park. In Plainfield, a non-essential business was closed, and in North Vale, a subject had been warned two previous times and yesterday was subsequently charged with EO violation and defiant trespass since she'd been warned two times previous. Lastly, just a subject charged with driving under the influence, was also charged with the EO violation.

And just to echo with regards to Atlantic City Convention Center, the staff that's come in from the Department of Defense, as well as I think the Commissioner's shop in DOH has hired 15 civilians to help support the Atlantic City medical station. About 28 of those staffers have also been shifted over to Salem Medical Center to support the caring for patients that we've shifted down from some of our northern hospitals. They're kind of splitting their duties and supporting us and being flexible, which is greatly appreciated. That's all I've got, Gov.

Governor Phil Murphy: Pat, thank you. Again, I'm going to start with Sam, I don't who's got the mic. Martel is that you? How are you? Martel, I think, has been here every day since we've started. But would love to ask you to please consider three, maybe four, if they're short questions at most each. We've got a big crowd today and we're under the gun. Not quite there.

Secondly, compliance to the knuckleheads who have been called out, they deserve to be called out for that kind of behavior, running people over at a testing site. I mean, are you kidding me? What are people thinking? But for the most part, folks are overwhelmingly doing the right thing and bless you and thank you for that. We just need you to continue doing that. It's our job to be straight with you to give you a sense of the road ahead of us. I think you're starting to see that we're seeing some light here, but the human behavior factor has an impact in those charts, those numbers, those personal stories, unlike anything I've ever seen before.

I'm concerned as we all are about ridiculous behavior, the likes of which Pat, you described. Unfortunately, we've got an example or two every day. I'm also concerned, I think we all are, about more benign behavior. My kids, seven years old, not getting the, you know, it's not the same experience at home as it is in the school building and that's a worry and a pressure. There is the, I lost my job, or I've got an enormous financial pressure, even if you didn't lose your job. And then, of course, there's the healthcare reality of this silent killer that's taken 4,000-plus lives in our state already. At one level, we get that. We understand all three of those families of concern.

You know, what's right for my kid? What's right for our economic health? What's right for our personal health? We get that. But we also get this: that unless we take care – and by the way, that leads to more benign behavior. It's the underground playdate. It's the, we weren't standing six feet apart at the end of the driveway, we're not doing that anymore. You can't do that, folks. You can't do that. This is first and foremost, of those three concerns that you rightfully have, for those of you with families, public health is number one. It trumps everything else. We don't get economic health, we don't get educational back in the schools health, without public health. It's got to be that order of events.

So I would ask you, please not only avoid just outright bad, hostile, stupid behavior, but also avoid the benign, let your guard down a little bit behavior because the minute we do that, that curve stops flattening. Infections go up and not down. Hospitalizations go up and not down. Sadly, fatalities go up and not down. We are on to something together. We can see the path to victory ahead of us, but we know just as certainly we have to continue to bear down. Please don't let your guard down, folks. I promise you, we will get there. We'll get there together. We'll be stronger than ever before. But please don't let your guard down. Sam, fire away.

Q&A Session

Andy Milone, Pine Barrens Tribune: Good afternoon, Governor and thank you for the time. We're hearing from a lot of our readers in the Pine Barrens area that you've authorized online automobile sales, vehicle sales, but it does them no good if they cannot register their vehicles – or their new vehicles on the DMV website. Additionally, we're hearing from high school seniors and foreign families that they cannot obtain the necessary documents to legally drive now that they are of age because DMV facilities are closed. Are there any plans currently in place to establish new vehicle registration and new license registration online? Or at least establish specific appointments for these folks? I have two more questions, please.

Governor Phil Murphy: Quickly. That was one.

Andy Milone, Pine Barrens Tribune: Yes, no problem. One would arguably said there are four aspects of this situation, health, public safety, the executive branch and the economy. We're curious to know, why isn't there an economic or business representative at these press briefings to give us an update on the economic impacts?

And the third part is, like I said, we're representative of the Pine Barrens, a lot of mom-and-pop shops, businesses and organizations. There's a lot of state assistance programs such as the NJEDA programs that automatically disqualify these businesses, given the requirements that favor commercial areas. We're just wanting to know, how many of these businesses in the rural parts are on the brink of bankruptcy if the shutdown lasts another one or two weeks, including Medford, Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge? What can you say to these businesses facing bankruptcy? What is your message to these rural business owners about any particular relief efforts for these business owners in these parts? Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: We can come back, Martel, can you go either that way or this way just a little bit? Perfect. Parimal, help me follow up on the DMV question, if you could, in terms of what we could do online. Do you have any quick response to that?

Deputy Chief Counsel Parimal Garg: Yeah, we've been in discussions with MDC about that. We don't have any news to break right now but we'll come back to you.

Governor Phil Murphy: I just got a note coming in here, Lily walking in that we should consider doing marriage licenses online, New York, that's what they're doing, I think that's something we're looking at as well. Can we come back to you on the DMV question? That includes high school seniors getting their driver's license to drive. We want them to stay at home though. We remind them to please stay at home, even though we'll give them the license, we'll find a way to get a license.

We have economic representatives here all the time. That includes me. I consider myself the head of sales, the head of the economic, department of the state. But we had Tim Sullivan here, the head of the EDA. We had Rob Asaro-Angelo here, who's the Commissioner of the Department of Labor. We spent a significant amount of time this weekend talking about what both a health and economic recovery looks like. We'll have those folks here from time to time, without question.

Mom-and-pop stores, we'll come back to you on the specifics in terms of their, it sounds like you're saying because of the rural nature of where they're located. I don't have a glib, quick answer for you, but we care about all businesses. Unfortunately, this just in, look at the amount of unemployment claims. It's tens of multiples of any previous high. The amount of small businesses that are either gone bust or may go bust. I'm encouraged, as I understand it, this 3.5 bill at the federal level has a big slug for small businesses. I can't tell you specifically how it impacts the rural small businesses, but maybe Parimal, you could follow up afterward if that's okay. Thank you for that. Please.

Reporter: Good afternoon. In advance of the tour of the Atlantic City Field Station tomorrow, do you expect that to be as heavily utilized as the other two field stations, given that the numbers so far in South Jersey have been lower? And then continuing on that vein, do you still expect South Jersey to see a spike? Or is there a chance that these leveling off numbers could indeed just level off and continue to go down?

Finally, you said that there were 73 testing sites in New Jersey and that's not enough to start to reopen. What is that benchmark in terms of testing? Where we would need to get to, to feel comfortable doing that?

Governor Phil Murphy: Great questions. Judy, at a minimum should come in here and perhaps Pat as well, but may I say a word or two on this? I can't speak for what the capacity looks like in Atlantic City, but we have made a decision collectively that healthcare infrastructure, and by the way, getting federal money, as Jared rightfully pointed out, to maintain that healthcare infrastructure is a step that we have taken and we'll continue to pursue under the theory, whether or not we need the beds next week or please God not six or 10 months from now, if this follows an H1N1 path, which God willing, it doesn't and we'll have therapeutics and whatnot in place to prevent that. We may need this infrastructure down the road, even if we don't need it in the next couple of weeks. I'll let Judy give you more details.

I mentioned earlier in passing, but I'm glad you asked it. A fair amount of discussion, literally today, on South Jersey. It was specific to Camden, because of a Philadelphia Inquirer story that got a lot of people focused. Curtis Jenkins, who's a dear friend, City Council President just reached out to me as I was speaking. Our guy spoke to Frank Moran, the Mayor, Donald Norcross, I mentioned I spoke to, had an exchange with Camden County Freeholder Lou Capelli. We were discussing the fact that I think it was last week, Judy, the feds had highlighted Philadelphia as the next hotspot, and so we were having that discussion literally today.

Is that happening? What's the spillover into South Jersey? Judy can come back to you. I don't think it's, and again, the experts will correct the record here. I don't think it's number of sites, as much as it is number of tests and how quickly. I think there's three big pieces of the three or four pieces of the healthcare infrastructure that we're going to need to give everyone the confidence. Forget us for a second, everybody else out there, the confidence that it's safe to get back in the water, as they say. Broad scale testing, numbers you hear, and again, I'm practicing without a license, at least 15,000 or 20,000 a day. That would be at least double what we've got now. But probably more far more importantly is that test you get back within 24 hours, not five to seven days. That won't work. By the way, and I'm not marrying myself to 15,000 or 20,000, either, because that's probably a bare minimum. That's what some of the experts have said per day.

Secondly, it's the contact tracing infrastructure as well. It's not just that you test, but what do you do if you've largely eliminated community spread and then you see a flare up? You want to know that quickly, testing, and then what are you going to do about it? So how do you find out? I got it, let's everybody else here figure out whether or not how much contact you had with me, etc.

And then thirdly is the process to isolate and quarantine. Then I think the fourth piece is what I've already said, which is healthcare infrastructure, including number of beds that are significant and are able to allow us to anticipate and get way far more out ahead of any other resurgence of this virus down the road. Judy, please correct the record. Thank you.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: You were fine. I think we're not expecting the Atlantic Center to be as busy as we're seeing, particularly in Secaucus. But we are expecting when we increase testing and the number of individuals that are asymptomatic, that need to quarantine, not isolate, that would be a little bit different, but quarantine, we need to have that space available. As you increase your testing and you find positive cases and you have to contact trace, there will be people that cannot go back home, or perhaps they don't have a home to go back to. If they're quarantined asymptomatic, the field is a place where more than likely they could be housed.

So we're not only preparing for right now, we're preparing for the next 12 months, to be honest. Camden has had a significant increase in positive cases. I don't have the absolute numbers.

Governor Phil Murphy: I've got it here, 2,255 in Camden County.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: It was almost a 2,000% increase is what they were reporting, so we're watching any dense population in the south, which there are fewer. We're watching them very carefully. We're working very closely right now with Kevin O'Dowd at Cooper in the testing potential and capacity they have.

Governor Phil Murphy: Kevin O'Dowd reminds me that we've said this before, but you've got a regional strategy North, Central, South. And Sheree Fellowhall, your point person in the north, Amy Minsu in the central, and Kevin O'Dowd at Cooper in the south. Ed, anything you want to correct the record on in terms of testing.

DOH Communicable Disease Service Medical Director Dr. Ed Lifshitz: No, I mean, that was just about perfect. You may not be licensed, but you're getting pretty close.

Governor Phil Murphy: I stayed at a Holiday Inn Express last night, as the ad used to say. I'm calling Andy, Sam, so Andy, sorry about that. The reason why you get shouted out again is because Sue Fulton is watching, our Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles and she said online sales through a dealer, you get a temporary tag that is extended every two months. The only thing that's excluded are private sales. So if I sell my car to you or you sell your car to me. Thank you. Dave, welcome back.

David Levinsky, Burlington County Times: Thank you, Governor and thank you for the concern that was voiced. The issue of testing, do we have any updates? I know there was a lot of discussion and potential excitement about the spit test from Rutgers, because that could be a quick turnaround and mass produced. Any update on that at all? I know the President was talking about testing is a local thing. Even if we have 73, I think you said, different testing facilities in New Jersey, are we still waiting two weeks before we're getting results? Do we have a sense, you had mentioned contact tracing, if we have enough health department infrastructure, personnel in the local health departments to be able to do that once we start ramping up testing, and then presumably could identify hotspots and then deal with them and so forth?

The number of groups, Governor, and individual lawmakers calling for New Jersey to reopen in a slightly hysterical vein seems to be very small right now, but as we increase the capability for us to begin to reopen, are you concerned that this voice and clamor may increase? How would you respond to these increasing calls to reopen our state? We may see other states start to do this that have not been as hard hit as New Jersey.

Finally, just to confirm, the hospital admission data that we're now getting, that we had asked about last week, we were talking about specifically for COVID-19 patients being admitted, yes?

Governor Phil Murphy: Correct.

David Levinsky, Burlington County Times: Okay, great. Like that's it. Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Okay. Thank you, Dave, very quickly. Rutgers, staying very close with Rutgers. As we've mentioned, they're doing, I would say it's more than a pilot, but they're working with Middlesex County. I want to give Ron Rios and his Freeholder team a big shout out, and we are continuing to work closely with them, as we are with a number of different providers, including also in close coordination with the White House.

Testing, two weeks is no longer the reality. It's really more five to seven days, is it not, at this point? In terms of getting – five to seven turnaround is, we think, what the norm is. The President has said it's a local thing, but the reality is it's a joint venture. You can't do all this by yourself. Again, there's sort of three rings of responsibility that I think we and our colleagues have. Jersey first, region, coordinate with the federal government. Right from the beginning, we just haven't had the national testing supplies that we need to do universal testing, which continues to be our objective. We have cobbled it together, I'm incredibly proud of the progress we've made to get to 73 testing sites, 7,000 to 9,000 a day from zero, but still not where we need to do, as you heard a minute ago, to give us the confidence to open up.

We did here today, and tell me if either of you heard it differently, that the CDC is going to explicitly put in 10 to 15 or 10 to 12, I forget which, individuals to help us coordinate in each American state, to help us coordinate contact tracing. We're going to need a lot more than that. It's going to be, as I mentioned on the call with the Vice President today, both testing and contact tracing is a combination of both technology and manpower. But that's the first time I think we heard that. That's a good step. But again, ways to go. We don't have the whole architecture, by any means, fitted out.

Yeah, there are some, as I mentioned the other day, there's irresponsible behavior. I don't have to repeat what I said the other day. There's irresponsible behavior, but not much of it from elected officials. I have to say on both sides of the aisle, folks have been overwhelmingly, even when we've disagreed on some stuff, have been incredibly constructive in their debate. And you get, I think most of our attention, at least as far as I could tell, is on parks, golf, and I mentioned earlier, education, schools.

You know, we would expect as the clock goes on, it's only human nature that folks, particularly as the weather gets better, take parks as an example, that that so called clamor, which again, has been overwhelmingly responsible. There are a few that are not, but overwhelmingly folks have been, listen, we love what you're doing, but we really want parks open and we've got to respond, as we have, based on the data we've got, we can't do that yet responsibly. As I've said, reminding folks, it's not a life sentence. We'll get there, and I hope sooner than later.

But the clamor, the fact of the matter is, this is about saving lives, and we're going to do what it takes to save as many lives as we can. We've lost too many already, and our job, collectively, is to keep that number – each one of these never a number, by the way, an individual precious life – to keep that as low as possible. Judy, anything you want to add to testing, contact tracing in particular? Hospital admissions, we already addressed that, that's COVID specific for you. Real quick, Dave, only because I love you. Come on down.

David Levinsky, Burlington County Times: Any sense at all, Governor, about we keep talking about we're going to have to have this testing increase. Is it next month, May? At some point, do we think maybe? Or is it going to be June? Any sense at all?

Governor Phil Murphy: It's going to have to be, I'll answer it myself. It's going to have to be before we with any confidence open things up, which means in my opinion, we've got to be in a completely different place in the next four to six weeks, is the way to think about it.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: On testing, you'll see us roll out some testing of vulnerable populations over a shorter period of time to see how we deal with it. That'll be started within the next two weeks.

Governor Phil Murphy: Yeah, so this is, among other things, taking what is now already happening, but make it much more robust, long-term care facilities, which has been a big exposure. Sir, do you have any?

Reporter: Governor, three questions for three of my NJTV NJ Spotlight colleagues.

Governor Phil Murphy: I think I noticed Elise handing you one, is that right?

Reporter: No. First, some experts are saying now may be the time to ban customers inside grocery stores. At what point do you think this would be considered, and is delivery-only feasible? Last week US Department of Labor recommended essential retailers begin more drive-through and curbside pickup options. That's one.

Number two is, what is the protocol for the undocumented to get tested? Many obviously don't have cars and can't drive to a drive-through location. Can a hospital or emergency room turn someone away who is uninsured but has symptoms? And similarly, if an undocumented or uninsured person does test positive and needs care, must that hospital admit and treat that person?

Number three is, do you have an explanation for the drop in hospitalized patients on ventilators? Could that have anything to do with the treatment trials underway? I.e. hydroxychloroquine or plasma? And are they reducing the severity of the disease? And is that something that you're actively investigating now?

Governor Phil Murphy: That was a creative definition of three questions, by the way. No, there's no plans right now to ban customers in grocery stores, but we do expect operators to enforce the social distancing, the mask wearing, the hygiene that we have put through our Executive Order and we expect adherence to that, period. I will let Judy come back, if it's okay Judy, and deal with the undocumented, but nobody gets turned away in this state for healthcare. And the drop in the hospitalization on ventilators, again, I'll have Judy comment on that. But I think today's data did show that, it's down relative to maybe a week ago, but it's down only a little bit over the past couple of days. Do you want to hit either of those?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: On the ICU, I mean, let's talk about the trials because I think that's the important part of that question, not just how it's affecting ICU. But there's a number of organizations in New Jersey, a number of hospitals that are in clinical trials, to see the efficacy of hydroxychloroquine, to look at plasma infusions, and to look at the antiviral, Remdesivir. They're going on and perhaps that adds to the number of patients in ICU because it's extending the life of the person in the ICU bed and maybe having better results. We obviously don't have those results yet, because they're trials, but New Jersey and particularly the larger organizations in New Jersey, are pretty active in treating patients with COVID-19 and I think having better results than we even imagined a month ago.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you, sir. Yes, please.

Reporter, News 12, New Jersey: News 12, New Jersey here. As a follow up to the Executive Order banning non-essential construction, it seems like most of the major construction projects in the state are still going on because of one exemption or another. Do you know of any major projects that have actually stopped and are you considering tightening some of those exemptions?

I have one more. Will you fine-tune any of your restrictions by region, since some of the areas of the state are seeing more growth of the virus than others?

Governor Phil Murphy: Is that it? I'm not aware. We can come back to you. Mahen, can you come back with the question as to whether or not there's any large-scale construction project that was halted? If you could bear with us on that? And I don't think we're considering any other tweaks to that for the time being Parimal, right?

Deputy Chief Counsel Parimal Garg: Not at this point, no.

Governor Phil Murphy: Yeah, not at this point. And the answer is, and I don't mean this from a healthcare perspective, because Judy's got a regional strategy but in terms of Executive Orders, you didn't ask this, but for instance, opening up parks in certain parts of the state and not others, no. No, no, no, because it will have unintended consequences that we can't handle. Pat will be the first to say, and Pat lives in one of these counties, where folks will say, hey, we're not as dense. We don't have as many cases. Sure enough, you open up one park in one county, we've got some of the nicest parks in America, never mind the region, and the entire region will come descend on that park, including from out of state. That's very separate from Judy and Ed in a health care strategy, which is very much regional. And so far, knock on wood, that has worked to good effect. But I don't see anticipate, Parimal, would you disagree with me? Please feel free to, everyone else does.

Deputy Chief Counsel Parimal Garg: No. So far, all of our Executive Orders have applied across the state.

Governor Phil Murphy: Could I see it potentially? Perhaps, but I don't see it in any realism. Is Katherine back there? I can't see you, that was the problem.

Katherine Landergan, Politico: Hi, how's it going?

Governor Phil Murphy: Nice to see you, it's been a while.

Katherine Landergan, Politico: You too. So in California, Governor Newsom announced a benefit fund for undocumented immigrants who can't qualify for unemployment. Is this something that you're considering in New Jersey? And then I also wanted to ask, are there any plans to change the state aid allocations for school districts? How should they be planning their budgets for the coming year? My last question is, hospitalizations are starting to fall off. But are you seeing a greater concentration of hospitalizations in central or southern counties? Or has there been an uptick at all?

Governor Phil Murphy: That last one, certainly, Judy, you should jump in. First of all, Governor Newsom is doing a great job. I can't say enough good things about some of the leaders that we are back and forth with constantly, Governor Cuomo is on that list, there are many. I saw it. I can't say that we've had any discussions about it, but Parimal is going to make sure to keep me honest, that's something we want to look at. You know we are, in many respects, as I've said so many times, the most diverse state in America and that means that we are the immigrant state in so many respects. What he's doing is potentially quite relevant for what we're up to.

Nothing new to report on state aid allocations. As you as know, we've extended the fiscal year to September 30, which I know is complicated because God willing, God willing, we will be going back to school before then. I accept that that's something that has more urgency to it. I've committed to a budget by August 25, I believe, at latest. Just to remind everybody, expenses are skyrocketing because we are the first responder to people who lost their job, their small businesses, somebody who's sick, and at the same time, our revenues have fallen off a cliff. I want to repeat our plea for large scale, big time, many, many billions of dollars of direct cash assistance from the feds. In the meantime, also to keep on that table the notion of borrowing through the Federal Reserve. It's not either/or, that you could do both of those things and do them responsibly. But we need help from the bullpen financially. Judy, do you mind hitting the question on hospitalizations? Particularly, are you seeing a different texture to this based on the region?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: We separate the state into three regions, and we actually look at bed capacity and available beds and filled beds, critical care and medical, surgical, by region. And what we've seen in the graphs that we see every day, because they're completed at 10:30 the night before, is that we see a little bit less use of beds in the northern region, but increasing in the central region, as you can imagine, especially the intensive care beds. We're watching that very carefully. That's where the regional collaboration comes in if we need to move equipment, or if we need more intensive care capacity. Definitely seeing more in central right now.

Governor Phil Murphy: I'll tell you, it just reminds again to say, great news, but caution. The great news is you look at that map we show every day you look at what you just said, Judy, particularly in the north, look at Bergen County, where it's taken now almost three weeks for this to double, just extraordinary behavior. The problem is that behavior, the minute it changes, it can it can literally take us the other way. So just folks again, please, please, keep doing what you're doing, because it's working.

Kyle Mazza, UNF News: Kyle Mazza. Thank you, Governor, for taking the time and for doing the briefings. I wanted to ask about the protests that are floating around and people are saying they're going to protest to reopen the state. I wanted to know what your thoughts were on that. Thank you, Governor.

Governor Phil Murphy: My pleasure. Listen, they haven't changed. I was asked, we'll come down to Matt, next Marthelle. They haven't really changed since I've been asked about it. They have a right to protest, I would prefer that they somehow do this virtually, and that they're not out leaving home. We want people to stay home. Remember, that's still what we want you to do, and to stay away from each other. They have their right to protest. But I will say this: if you look at the facts, if you look at the data, if you look at the science, it is unmistakable what we should be doing. Unambiguous. And that is, staying the course that we're on. Stay home, stay away from each other. It's not a forever. It's not a life sentence. But it is unambiguous what our steps should be.

So while I respect their right to protest, I wish they would do it virtually from home and responsibly, number one. And number two, I literally don't agree with them. Literally just don't agree with them. They have a right to protest, but the facts are overwhelmingly on the side of doing what we're doing. Again, that won't last forever. We are right now meeting morning, noon and night, figuring out what do we need in place? Where is this virus – again, personal health creates economic health. Let's get ourselves healthy again and then we'll get our economy healthy again. I'll be the happiest guy in America, the minute we can turn that dimmer on and get back to some sense of normalcy. Thank you. Matt.

Matt Arco, Star-Ledger: Thanks, Governor. Speaking about testing, I'm curious to get your reaction to the Trump administration, specifically the Vice President who you mentioned, remarks about states having enough testing and there's plenty to go around. Also, the spread of the infection in Washington nursing homes was linked by the CDC to staff members working multiple jobs and taking the virus with them. Any consideration here in New Jersey to limit workers to only one facility?

And real quick, you mentioned blueprint, you mentioned earlier --

Governor Phil Murphy: Was that long-term care specifically?

Matt Arco, Star-Ledger: Nursing homes and long-term care, yes. You mentioned that you're going to be announcing a blueprint to reopening the state. Curious just of a timeline about when you can expect that? Maybe by the end of the week? And just what we can expect to hear from that, Governor?

Governor Phil Murphy: Yep. Listen, I think I'm going to say something which is from the heart. I'm on a back and forth, we all are, with all variety of federal partners. For the most part, as I said, we've not had one call that hasn't been answered or returned. Now, we have not necessarily always liked the answer. We've gotten stuff, but we've invariably needed more. There have been some extraordinary highlights though. The Veterans Affairs team have been extraordinary. The Army Corps has been extraordinary and FEMA, although at one point there were waffling on us, have been extraordinary. That must be said.

And high on that list is the Vice President, I have to say. I have to say that. He has been responsive. Again, we haven't gotten a fraction of what we wanted, necessarily, but he has been responsive. I would just say with the greatest respect, we don't see it that way as it relates to testing. There is not as far as we could tell, plenty to go around. We've turned over every stone we could find here. We need more capacity, more materials, we needed it on a going-in basis, and we continue to need it. I say that with the greatest of respect, the utmost respect for him and for his office.

Judy can come back to you on long-term care employees with Ed, but I think we highlighted, you highlighted right up front that you had the reality of asymptomatic workers in these long-term facilities unwittingly, and this is unfortunately not just the New Jersey story or tragedy that's unfolded. This is a national one, but please come back to that.

And the blueprint, I would hope you would have some sort of a broad blueprint this week. It will be broad. I would guess it will not be specific as to timing. But it'll be a series of principles that have values that will guide us, that are frankly, already doing that, but as we sort of put the pieces in place to get back to some sort of new normalcy. Judy, would you add anything on either testing or long-term care in particular?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Well, I'll talk about long-term care. We don't anticipate telling CNAs particularly that they can't work and they must work in only one organization. There's a reason why they're working in several places. It's because the wages are not enough to support what they need to do to support their families, put food on the table, and they're working their little hearts to the bone here, just trying to survive. What I'd rather do is take better care of them, making sure that they understand their own health and wellbeing and how that's transferred to whatever patient they're taking care of, at whatever facility.

Governor Phil Murphy: I don't know what this looks like, so I'm just saying this, and disagree if you wish, Judy. You've forgotten more about this than I'll know. To say that we are going to accept the reality of the long-term care facility industry on a going into basis to this crisis as an ongoing reality, that will not happen. There's profound, tragic big and small lessons that all of us have learned at a national level, and certainly in New Jersey. I want to underscore what Judy said. We've got heroic employees, not just healthcare workers in hospitals, but in long-term care facilities and veterans homes, in psychiatric hospitals, in corrections facilities, in homes for the developmentally disabled, whatever it might be. And in too many cases in this country, and in this state, they're not compensated what they should be compensated, at the levels they should be compensated, and they've been going in without the armor that they should have had and need. I would say no more acutely than in long-term care facilities. You can assume that's something that we're looking at in a very comprehensive way. I'll leave it there for the time being. Elise, please.

Elise Young, Bloomberg: Good afternoon. On your Trump call, when you pressed for more cash for states, what was the President's reaction, exactly, if you can say? And regarding the veterans homes, how has Vineland managed to avoid an outbreak that was so widespread in Menlo Park and Paramus? How widespread is the testing in Vineland?

And in a disclosure statement, your administration mentioned \$5 billion in potential geo borrowing. Does that represent the total of what you would seek, or do you expect to add to that figure, the Fed program and short-term borrowing? Last week you said the fed program would cap New Jersey at \$9 billion.

Governor Phil Murphy: Without betraying a private conversation, but I think he said it publicly, and while I'm happy to hear this, I just want to reiterate something I've been saying. He reiterated privately, just a general matter what's been said publicly, which is small businesses were the focus of 3.5. And also implying that states would get their attention in the next round.

I would just say this. I want to help small businesses as much as anybody in America, but by helping small businesses doesn't mean that we can't help states. We are the front line reality right now. Both sides of the aisle would agree with this. We are the ones at the point of attack if you're sick, if you've lost your job, if you are a small business. And again, we want help for all the above but for us to continue to be able to responsibly be there, we're going to need a lot of help or the consequences, without getting into them, will be grave.

Again, I want to reiterate Senator Menendez and Senator Cassidy have a really good co-sponsored bill, Democratic and Republican sponsors. It's exactly what the doctor ordered. Before I turn it over to, Judy, yeah, I think the answer is formulaically, Elise, as we do the math, we can do up to \$9 billion so I think we reserve the right to revisit that part. Part of that answer depends on the one I just gave you, the extent to which we get direct cash assistance to the states, that puts us into a different place and a better place, assuming it's a sufficient amount of support.

Judy, any comment on why Vineland might be different from Paramus, or Ed, from Menlo Park?

DOH Communicable Disease Service Medical Director Dr. Ed Lifshitz: I don't know the specifics as to why that might be the case. Certainly, this is affecting different facilities in a variety of ways for different reasons, everything from luck as to whether it gets exposed to infection control, so all these different things can come into play. But exactly why Vineland versus the others? No, I don't know.

Governor Phil Murphy: Elise, I think this is on there, just to repeat, I think today's census on Vineland, 300 licensed beds, 282 residents, one confirmed case, four ill residents pending a test, two, I think that's two of whom are hospitalized. Is that two of the four? And no deaths, thank God, please God it stays that way. One staff person who has COVID-19, and none pending, and thank God no deaths among staff. Is that today's? John, please take us home.

John McAlpin, Bergen Record: Is Andover required to stop admissions and if it is, is that the only facility in Jersey required to stop that? Can we get details on the 11 facilities that were visited over the weekend? Are these deficiency reports available? Could they be made public?

On Andover, you mentioned that you have to accept some of their changes that were required. If you don't accept them, what's the next step? What authority do you have next? And the nursing home numbers given today include confirmed deaths, as well as probable deaths. Can we get probable deaths in the overall death total? If not, that kind of skews the number of deaths as a percentage at nursing homes, it makes it appear much larger than it is in general.

Governor, on Saturday, you telegraphed the possibility of significant layoffs. Are you making any preparations for furloughing state employees? Have you discussed things with your cabinet? Have you discussed things with legislative leaders? Are you making any plans for that, understandably if you don't get the money?

Governor Phil Murphy: I thought you said 21, not 11? That your team had visited.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: 21 facilities.

Governor Phil Murphy: 21 facilities.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Since Thursday. Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday.

Governor Phil Murphy: I will leave it to you on the Andover and the 21. No, I'll leave my comments where they are. We've got a probably and/both get a lot of federal money and borrow money through the Federal Reserve at historic, we don't know the details, but one would think at historically attractive rates. We need either or both. Most likely both. Let's just hope that we get that combination in sufficient size. We'll leave it there for the time being, because the consequences are too dire to even discuss financially. Judy.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: I think we announced that we were doing 11 over the weekend, but we ended up doing 21 from Thursday to Sunday, as more surveyors their N-95s came in too large, but then we got the right fit tests and more went out into the field. They were able to do 21. Their reports are written up and they are posted. I don't know the timeframe. As soon as they can. They are more anxious to get out in the field and to see as many organizations as possible, particularly in the northern part of the state.

If we don't accept what we've required from Andover, we do have the authority to place individuals in Andover.

Governor Phil Murphy: With that, I'm donning my mask, as we all will. Thank you, all. Just remember, a concept that we said today more explicitly probably than we've said before. Personal health creates economic health. Personal health creates economic health, and that's our mindset. That's what all of our mindset needs to be.

For the members of the press, we'll be together again tomorrow at 3:00 p.m. Again, apologies for the delay. We'll be at the Atlantic City field medical station at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow morning. I will then do a run through, I think Wildwood after that. We'll be back with you tomorrow afternoon. Details, we'll let you know the details on Wednesday. Commissioner Judy Persichilli, thank you. Dr. Ed. Lifshitz, thank you. Colonel Pat Callahan, thank you. Director Maples, Parimal Garg, the rest of the team. Folks, again, personal health creates economic health. Stay at it. We're doing an extraordinary job. Just an extraordinary job. But please, we need to stay at it, folks. And if we do, we'll crack the back of this damn virus, and we'll emerge as one New Jersey family, stronger than ever before. Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy

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Office of Governor PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6000